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THE MUSKET

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

February 2005 Volume 6; Issue 3

Senate Debates Recruitment Bill

By Hannah Hsieh

Over the past three weeks the LHS Student-Faculty Senate has been debating a bill, which if passed, may have enormous implications for both Lexington as well as for other public schools throughout the United States. The bill, as currently written would bar all recruiters - be they the armed forces, institutions of higher learning, or employers - from recruiting at LHS as long as they maintain official policies that discriminate against anyone based on "sexual orientation." Since any organization which wishes to come on our campus to recruit must first receive permission from the administration in order to do so, this bill could be a major factor in determining who can be at LHS.

Although the bill's language is intended to cover all groups which openly discriminate, clearly the biggest target here would be the United States armed forces. As a result of the language inserted in the No Child Left Behind Act, schools and colleges are required to provide military recruiters the "same access" to high school campuses as colleges and prospective employers. However, since the military's stated policy is to refuse enlistment to anyone who is openly gay and to discharge persons who are found to be gay, according to the sponsors of this bill, their practices run head on into the Lexington Public School's stated anti-discrimination policy, which appears in both the student handbook and in the systemwide anti-discrimination guidelines which currently adhere to Massachusetts state law.

The debate in the Senate has been quite heated up to this point. Some senators like math teacher Michael Normile see this bill as nothing less than a slap in the face of the U.S. military at a time when our nation is at war. Others, like the Senate's Assistant Moderator Jim Williams, have pointed out that the real purpose of this bill should not be interpreted as anti-military but rather to open a debate on why, in this day and age, gay and lesbian persons are not allowed to serve in the military if they wish to.

In 1993 President Bill Clinton issued the executive order commonly referred to as the "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy relative to gay persons in the military. Under this policy, gay persons could serve without punishment as long as they kept their sexual orientation private and the military did not actively investigate their personal lives when they were off duty. However, as evidence has indicated, the "don't ask..." policy has been something of a failure. Currently, there is a class action suit being brought by a group of gay persons who are challenging the military's stated policy as openly discriminatory.

Here at LHS much work has

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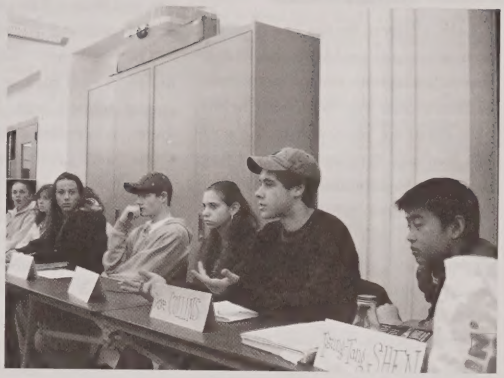

Photo Credit: Selena Lane

Senate debates the legality of the new Recruitment Bill.

Ash Selected as New Super

By Marina Gibbons

Next school year will bring a new superintendent to Lexington. Paul Ash, superintendent of Westwood since 1998, will replace interim superintendent William Hurley, who was appointed after the departure of Joanne Benton. Ash was chosen through a careful process headed by the Lexington School Committee and two subcommittees.

After a consultant group researched prospective superintendents, one subcommittee selected the most promising of the applicants' resumés. The other subcommittee interviewed those candidates and recommended three to the School Committee, Deborah Perry, Head of Lexington High's English Department, was among the interviewers, and describes the process of narrowing down the candidate group as "a very thorough process."

The other two finalists were

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The Death of Cancelled Classes

By Marina Gibbons

Most upperclassmen have noticed by now that fewer classes are being canceled than before; instead, it's becoming common for students of all grades to be assigned substitute teachers when their usual teachers are not in school.

Although the presence of substitutes in classes of students with open campus may seem to be a new development in school policy, it is a revival of several Senate bills passed in 1991 and 1994. The policies stipulate that classes consisting completely of juniors and seniors should be canceled only if their teachers can assert that the students can work more productively elsewhere. These acts were created in response to a situation in which it was difficult to find effective substitute teachers.

LHS Principal Dr. Michael Jones feels that the popular interpretation of the class-cancellation policies has changed over time. Teachers have recently begun canceling classes in situations where the presence of a substitute teacher would benefit students. The re-enforcement of the policies is intended to remind students and teachers of the previous bills' purposes.

Jones has "strong reservations" about canceling classes, feeling that there should be "the same quality of learning [in class] whether or not a teacher is absent." Believing that the availability of effective substitute teachers has improved dramatically since the Senate acts were passed, Jones has asked teachers to cancel classes less frequently than they request substitutes.

Upon learning that a teacher is unable to teach classes on a certain day, the school will call Kelly Services. In turn, the agency will contact a substitute teacher and send him to the high school. In the event that there are not enough substitutes available through Kelly Services for the entire school system, classes consisting entirely of upperclassmen will be canceled.

Some teachers, however, are doubtful that substitute quantity and quality has greatly improved. Many disagree on how often their colleagues "gratuitously" canceled classes instead of considering substitutes before the Senate bills' revival.

Even the presence of effective and reliable substitutes in the classroom may not guarantee that work will get done. According to one student who has open campus, "Being stuck in a class with a substitute is a waste of our time. If a teacher leaves work for the sub to hand out, it's usually busywork, and so no one's going to do it." Some classes end up watching videos that are barely connected to their subject matter, instead of being permitted to leave and study in the library.

Also, teachers can no longer specify which substitutes will be assigned to their classes, whereas in the past it was easier for teachers to ensure that their classes would be taught by substitutes with some background in the subject matter.

The popular opinion is that there is a conscious effort on the part of the school administration to deter teachers of upperclassmen from canceling classes. Jones has heard arguments from both supporters and opponents of the issue after meeting with the Senate and various teachers, but he is still in favor of students remaining in class.

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New Restaurant Lexx Brings Something X-tra

By Meredith Niles and Alexandra Edelstein

Lexx, a "tavern for the 21st century", opened recently on Massachusetts Avenue in Lexington's town center. Owner Don Rosenberg and Chef Christopher Ryan are pleased with the positive feedback they have received from the Lexington community.

The restaurant possesses a warm sophistication that welcomes families, students, and couples alike. The décor incorporates deep earth tones and modern art to create an atmosphere that transports its customers from Lexington center to an stylish café on Newbury Street.

Complete with candles, couches, charismatic waiters, and a full service bar, Lexx stands out as a classy new addition to the center.

The menu, though not overwhelming in size, offers a wide variety of dishes. The appetizers cost between $7-$9 each, ranging from house-cured spare ribs and Prince Edward Island mussels, to flat bread and grilled pizza.

The gourmet salads incorporate unique flavors such as beets with goat cheese topped with Balsamic Vinaigrette, while also offering the classic Caesar and Lexx's own house salad. The entrées consist primarily of seafood and meat, but there is also a daily pasta special and a vegetarian option. Customers can assume to spend around $20 on most main dishes, but the menu also exhibits several less pricey burger options.

LHS students may be a bit intimidated by the steep prices. One student said, "I split an entrée with my friend because it was too expensive to each get our own meal. There was plenty of food for both of us, and the bill was much more reasonable."

Another option is to go to Lexx just for dessert. Another student enthusiastically claimed, "Lexx's desserts are so good that my friends and I have made a Friday night habit of catching a movie at the Flick before heading over to share a piece of white chocolate cheesecake."

Not only has the food received a thumbs-up, but Lexx prides itself in its quality and safety. General manager Andrew Corbin boasted, "We carefully select vendors who adhere to our standards of offering 'clean' food: all our beef, pork, and turkey are 100% free of nitrates, nitrites, antibiotics, added growth hormones, preservatives, animal by-products, artificial flavors or colors... We offer the finest seasonal produce from local farms."

The general consensus? Lexx's positive atmosphere and unique culinary pursuits has left Lexington with a good taste in its mouth. A satisfied customer states, "I was very impressed and I would definitely go back."

Sophomore Open Campus Considered

By Hannah Hsieh

The LHS Student Faculty Senate's Policy Committee is presently considering a bill which would extend open campus to sophomores during the last quarter of this school year. At this point, the language of the bill is still being crafted in committee, though the full text should be ready for Senate debate after vacation. As currently written, the bill would require tenth graders to have a 3.0 GPA and 10 hours of community service completed to be eligible for open campus.

The committee has delayed bringing the bill to the full Senate until they have received information from the Guidance Department as to how many students would be affected. In addition, they have also asked the administration for their concerns if such a bill were to be passed. The intention is to make this proposal experimental, and then assess at the end of the year how effectively such an extension of open campus worked out.

Jones Delays Decision on Weighted GPA

By Hannah Hsieh

Recently, LHS Principal Dr. Michael Jones asked the Student Faculty Senate to grant him an extension of two more months to consider the bill passed this past November which would entirely eliminate the weighted Grade Point Average from LHS record keeping. Jones had initially asked for a two month extension back in the fall, so that he could investigate the consequences of removing the weighted GPA. His major concern was that this action not jeopardize any LHS students in the college application process.

At a recent faculty meeting the issue was discussed at length and a straw vote was nearly unanimous in its support for eliminating the weighted GPA. Jones said, however, that he has not received such widespread support from the School Council or the Lexington community as a whole. He indicated that the latest two month extension period could be used to educate the community as to what the weighted GPA currently does or does not do, relative to the college admittance process. The weighted GPA was initially put in place because LHS has historically refused to adopt a class ranking system.

According to a guidance department college survey conducted two years ago, almost all of the colleges they contacted do not consider our weighted GPA system. In fact, many use their own measurements and formula based on their profile of LHS. Jones is hoping that an update of that survey might be useful in allaying some of the community fears, if it was ultimately decided to scrap the weighted GPA. He also suggested that dropping the weighted GPA would perhaps go into effect starting with the class of 2009, next year's incoming freshmen. The latest two month extension is due to expire in the middle of April.

Students Mix Comfort and Glam

By Philippa Eccles

The coming of winter signals a change in fashion at LHS when students convert their wardrobes to the more practical in order to fend off the cold. Amidst the variety of styles and eclectic tastes that can be found, a few notable trends have gained popularity this season.

While many at LHS seem inclined to stick to the comfort of sweatshirts and jeans, accessories add a hint of glam to one's outfit. Skinny scarves, while offering no protection against the cold, do provide an easy way to spice up an otherwise ordinary outfit with color. Patterns range from zigzag to polka dot, although the more eccentric ones are composed of several different materials.

Funky flats have also emerged, perfect for adding some zest to jeans. They come in bright hues, striped, or even sequined. Suede, bowling-style inspired sneakers are also a great new way to dress up an outfit. As far as comfort level goes, these shoes have a definite advantage over heels.

Chunky jewelry is another popular accessory, particularly chandelier earrings which range from subtle to enormous.

Long puffy coats, ideal for keeping warm, have also emerged as a winter must. While neutrals tend to be the most popular, these jackets can be seen in bright, even pastel hues. Pea coats have also returned, and the addition of argyle and plaid-patterned sweaters add a hint of preppiness to this long-time favorite. On the other hand, off-the-shoulder sweaters and shirts (best worn over a tank top) are a more unconventional addition.

Ugg boots, surprisingly, have returned for a second season. Although their sudden and explosive appearance last winter seemed to have been just a sign of a fleeting trend, their practicality and warmth make these boots too appealing to simply discard. In order to keep this style fresh, however, jeans are now rolled instead of tucked in.

Though not particularly flattering to the more large-footed, these boots have a relaxed, comfort-comes-first attitude. Fur-lined bags, undoubtedly offspring of the Ugg-boot trend, can also been seen around the halls. Of course, the most refreshing LHS trend is that so many dress regardless of the latest rage, with their own fashion sense in mind.

Photo Credit: Ani Sanyal

Ugg boots have been a hot fashion commodity since September of last year.

Classes Need More Interaction

By Josiah Reibstein

"Any questions? None? Okay, then let's move on to the next section of the book..."

Does this sound like an interaction you've heard in a class recently? Dialogues such as this - or at least a variation of it - have become all too common in some classes at Lexington High School. This manner of instruction is currently present in many classrooms, usually heard the day after a particularly perplexing homework assignment in the textbook.

There's almost a formula to it. The teacher asks if there are any questions about the homework assignment, there is a frantic shuffle of notebooks to find the note for the page in the text where information was badly described, a quick glance by the teacher looking for raised hands, and finally dejectedness by the class when the question forum is prematurely abandoned and a new chapter, equally confusing, is begun.

Many classes at LHS these days rely on the students' ability to understand a wealth of recently read material without time given over to process it in a classroom forum. In the end, too many chalkboards are simply scrawled with the evening task: "Read and understand pp. 326-332, and do problems 45-57 (odd only)." It's as if coverage of such a large body of material overwhelms the learning process.

Subsequent classes are then supposed to be spent clarifying the information "read and understood" the night before. Sometimes that happens, sometimes not. If questions are asked and clarified, then the students go home to wade through more pages of dense material for that night's homework. This process will continually repeat itself throughout the year. Other times questions aren't asked because students aren't even sure what the right questions should be.

And by the time they figure it out, the class has already moved on to "tonight's assignment." Often this method of learning simply compounds the confusion, irritation, and leaves some students with more low quiz grades. The cycle repeats itself until a date for the chapter or unit test is set. Then students start cramming in their frantic efforts to make sense of an overwhelming load of confusing material.

We don't expect every piece of information to be spoon-fed, gift-wrapped, or reduced to the lowest common denominator. There are certain levels of understanding that students should be able to master by themselves. However, too often students enter a classroom expecting that the only purpose for that day's class is for the teacher to assign more homework while collecting yesterday's. This leaves many students asking: what's the point of trying to do the homework if the material has never been sufficiently explained or been discussed and processed afterwards so that all of the students in the class understand it?

Too many classes have been reduced merely to complements of the textbook, when ideally the situation should be the other way around. Teachers should be adding new ideas, insights, and anecdotes to supplement what's in the book. The readings should be jumping off points for more in-depth class discussions which serve to open up the material we have read the night before. Without that, courses which rely solely on the textbook are really asking students to teach themselves. This devalues the classroom experience, one which our new attendance policy implies is of the utmost value.

It is, of course, not reasonable to expect every class at Lexington High School to mirror the kind of clichéd environment found in such Hollywood films with school settings as Dead Poet's Society and Mr. Holland's Opus.

However, it should not be asking too much for classes to be places of genuine learning and interaction and not places where discipline and busywork predominate. The textbook should be a supplement to the learning process and not the center of it. Homework should be enriching and reinforcing, and not just busy work to occupy our non-school time.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Captains Support Girls Soccer Coach

Dear Editor,

On Friday, January 14, 2005, Coach Keith Woods was dismissed from his position as varsity head coach for the Lexington High School girls' soccer program. He had been successful in bringing the girls to the state tournament three times during his five years with LHS, while helping the girls become competitive with the strongest teams in the state such as Winchester and Lincoln-Sudbury.

We understand that on occasion, Coach Woods did not always articulate his thoughts and criticism in a positive way. Having gone through several seasons with him, we have experienced both joy and disappointment. However, we never deemed his behavior as abusive like some have alleged. While his coaching may have been intimidating at times, his comments were always productive in the long run. Looking back now that our soccer careers at LHS are over, we are able to not only recognize how he always wanted the best for us, but also understand how truly valuable our experiences were because we learned how to accept criticism. He was not making personal attacks; he wanted us to improve our skills, think more logically and develop our game sense. We became stronger because he was honest in his criticism; he did not indulge us with false praise and tell us we were the best when we knew we were not.

We strongly disagree with the outcome of the proceedings that led to Coach Woods' dismissal. We honestly believe Coach Woods was terminated because of parental complaints and not from any direct complaints by the girls on the team. There was so much hearsay among the parents that it was hard for them to understand what was really happening on the field. We believe that many parents and players failed to recognize the degree of competition necessary at the varsity level as well as the privilege of playing a varsity sport. Parental claims were often based on second hand information from inexperienced, disgruntled players who felt they did not get enough playing time or did not appreciate their prospects as first-years on the team.

It is upsetting to us that the objections of the parents, which were often blown out of proportion, should have such influence on the athletic department. Furthermore, we are also displeased to learn that some parents went directly to the administration rather than acting more maturely and first consulting with the captains or with the other coaches. The way in which we found out about Coach Woods' fate was unacceptable because it was second hand from phone conversations and e-mails among conspiring parents. It was unfair and at the same time surprising, since the assistant coaches and captains were notified of effects of the parental complaints and Woods' impending dismissal by Woods himself, just days before his meeting with the administration.

As senior captains, we feel insulted and unappreciated because we had to request a consultation with the administration on this matter. If Woods' employment was at stake, shouldn't the administration have asked for our input?

Even after meeting with the school principal and athletic director, we, the senior captains of the team, feel that the process by which Coach Woods was evaluated was inadequate and certainly did not warrant his dismissal. Likewise, the administration failed to take into consideration our perspectives and those of the team's assistant coaches, the adults who most witnessed Woods' actions. We never felt that our opinions or credibility were valued. In the end, it seemed that their consultation with us was merely an "act of courtesy." We felt that the decision to dismiss Woods had already been made before we were allowed to testify in his behalf.

The evaluation of Woods' employment was poorly handled to his disadvantage. Despite the efforts of several significant figures in the defense of Coach Woods, the complaints of the parents prevailed and caused Woods' dismissal. It is crucial to consider the context of this event and to recognize that in this case, parents may have wielded excessive power and have interfered in a process that really was not their place. Unfortunately, as a result, we have lost a knowledgeable and passionate coach and created a schism between parents, players and administrators—an obstacle to overcome next year.

Sincerely,

Tracy Chang, Alexa Dougherty, Natasha Groblewski

(Tri-Captains of this year's soccer team)

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Removing Weighted GPA Will Have Negative Impact

By Andrew Yegian

Recently, the LHS Student and Faculty Senate voted to abolish weighted GPA's from report cards, thus removing consideration of the difficulty of classes a student takes in their general assessment. The reason for this change is supposedly to relieve students of the pressure to overreach their abilities and take too many honors level classes. However, the elimination of the weighted GPA will actually have a negative effect on the students of LHS.

Students will become unmotivated to take challenging courses because it is not a factor in their GPA, which is detrimental to their academic success. Level one and honors classes have the same importance, so it is natural that more students will take level one classes in order to maintain a high GPA.

Although some students will not be affected by this decision and will continue to take honors classes, a number of them will not be working up to their full potential.

Another negative consequence of the decision to abolish the weighted GPA is that those who take honor classes are not recognized for their efforts. They are not receiving any acknowledgement for their work in classes that are at a higher standard than the rest. The weighted GPA was the only thing that appreciated the effort of honor students.

High school students are wise enough to make decisions on the level of their classes, while not feeling the necessity to take too many challenging courses. Taking away the weighted GPA is implying that students cannot assess their own academic limits and that they make their course choices based on academic pressure.

Lastly, the elimination of the weighted GPA will definitely have a damaging affect on a student's education at LHS, for it reduces the importance of challenging oneself. This is imperative for a rewarding high school experience.

Band Night Rocks LHS

By Andrew Gerzon

Mixed in among the Seasonal Concert, Jazz Night and the musical, Band Night changed things up with a new kind of concert. While various LHS bands graduated last year, many new freshman bands have also arrived. The new rock band Wreak Havoc kicked off the concert at 7 o'clock in Commons 2 and was soon followed by the bands Tracy Strangelove and Emergency Exit. After that, the newly-formed sophomore band G-Rod and the Nastys performed, followed by The Dudich and DuRock.

The next band, Moonshine, was the source of some controversy. During the performance, lead singer sophomore Julie Osburne-Rothstein crowd surfed into the audience. At the end of their performance, other members of the band did the same.

It was thought that Moonshine would be "kicked out" of all future band nights for its conduct, but the problem was soon resolved. Moonshine will still be appearing in band nights.

Force of Habit performed next, followed by the jazz group Monkey Chicken. To finish up the evening of rock n' roll, The Situation performed to close the show. Considering the loss of many good bands from last year, this years' first band night was quite successful.

Seasonal Concert a Festive Winter Hit

By Alexandra Dimodica

Lexington High School's Seasonal Concert, held Wednesday, December 15 in the LHS auditorium, was a success. Sparkling lights illuminated the black stage and glittered off the assortment of brass, woodwind, percussion and string instruments scattered with their owners on stage. A festive spirit filled the air as students, parents, and faculty members took their seats in support of the Repertoire Orchestra, Symphonic Band Gold and Symphonic Band Blue.

The Repertoire Orchestra kicked off the night with renditions of "Bold Venture", "Concerto Grosso VIII", "Three Pieces for Orchestra" and "Sleigh Ride". The orchestra and their experienced conductor Ms. Haas should receive an 'A' for effort on all four pieces, despite some rhythm missteps in "Sleigh Ride". This well-known holiday favorite featured a bout of miscommunication between the ensemble, the conductor, and the highly anticipated percussive clip-cloppers. However, the song was still adored as the only piece of the night to boldly present the holiday spirit.

Next up was the Symphonic Band Gold, also lovingly known as "Bronze Band" - this nickname was bestowed upon the group by their friends in Symphonic Band Blue for its performance in last year's MICCA festival. Director Jeffrey Leonard led his band gallantly through their first of three majestic pieces, "Lullaby of the Drums". Boston University student teacher Chris Horn then conducted "Ginger Marmalade" with clear excitement. Suffice it to say, Gold Band clearly exceeded their reputation as Bronze Band.

To wrap up the jubilant musical night, the second Symphonic band, Blue Band, performed with an unprecedented amount of excitement and camaraderie. The exuberant band members performed an eclectic selection of crowd-pleasing numbers under the direction

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Second Quarter DSI Impresses

By Christiana Kim

Each quarter, students at Lexington High School look forward to watching the DSI performances and missing classes to do so. DSI, which stands for Drama of Social Issues, has been around at LHS for 14 years, with its performances improving in quality and amusement each year. It is one of the most anticipated presentations produced by LHS students.

The second quarter's performance topic, Hate and Ridicule, is an issue few of us consider until we are the victims of it ourselves. The presentation prompted students to bear in mind that although we look down upon hate and ridicule, most of us have said hurtful remarks to someone.

The cast, which consisted of students in Mr. Bogart's DSI class, acted out scenarios representing incidents that occur daily. One performance demonstrated security measures taken in an airport. The members of security made sure to thoroughly check Arabs and people sporting turbans, while allowing others to pass by easily. The most memorable scene of the DSI presentation was the finale, in which the lights were dimmed and a few DSI members stood saying "funny", biased jokes. Then the audience was asked if they wanted to know who said the jokes. Mirrors were brought out, revealing the audience themselves.

The majority of the music chosen to play between scenes were popular songs including Linkin Park's "Numb" and "Take me out" by Franz Ferdinand. Other pieces included in the performance were created by the DSI cast and were meticulously chosen, since the music played a significant role in expressing the moods of each scene.

Overall, the DSI performance was a success and brought together the students of LHS to have fun and bring to light social issues that face students today.

OXFAM Event Mixes Fun and Charity

By Amelia Servi

Late at night on Friday, December 10, the walls of Commons 2 rattled with the sound of the OXFAM concert. The event, organized by Students of Lexington United for Justice (SLUJ), was a remarkable success. It featured delicious food, varied and talented bands, and an enthusiastic audience. Now in its second year, the event made $1,426 from tickets and donations for OXFAM International, an organization that works to prevent world hunger by helping developing countries build sustainable economies.

Attendance included namely the high school's head-banging population, SLUJ members, and the friends and parents of those involved in the event. The charity concert itself commenced with a banquet featuring a buffet of local, organic, fair-trade, and vegetarian food prepared by SLUJ members. While some students reading the signs in the hallway found it ironic that an event to aid world hunger featured a banquet, SLUJ organizers saw things differently.

For SLUJ member and senior Emma Melton, "The point was to have a banquet and realize how privileged we are compared to millions of others." Senior Tristan Husby, another SLUJ member added, "The banquet raised awareness of food and where it comes from within the world economy." SLUJ members handed out information during the banquet that explained the origin of the food in the buffet.

As the banquet ended, the classical group The 232 String Trio took the stage. Invited for the benefit of the adults in the audience, their Mozart and Bach pieces provided a transition between the banquet and the main concert. When the trio had finished their program, the chairs were pushed aside and the amplifiers were brought in; many adults got up to leave as hundreds of students flooded into the Commons. SLUJ chose to have the student bands provide the entertainment because, according to Melton, "The bands are fun and there would be dancing." Added Husby, "The bands provided another draw for people to come to the event." The OXFAM organizers planned well, and 175 people showed up for the concert.

Up first was The Situation playing a punk-rock program and giving an easy start to the evening. Monkey Chicken, a funk/jazz group went next, and was followed by Dance Radio, a band comprised mainly of Winchester High School members who played mostly original songs. Next up was Moonshine, a metal group.

While the lead singer's voice was drowned out by the music, the group was able to stoke the crowd to a spinning, pushing, adrenaline high. Concluding the concert was Devil in the Kitchen, a folk/Celtic metal group and by far the most anticipated band of the evening.

For the most part, audience members at the concert were unconcerned that the concert was for a good cause. "I don't even know what OXFAM stands for, but Devil in the Kitchen was really good," said junior Paul Reny. SLUJ members agreed that they should have talked more about the cause during the concert. Senior and SLUJ member Colin Downs-Dudley commented, "It would have been nice to have heard more about OXFAM. Still, people were asking questions."

The event's high turnout was in large part due to its eclectic nature. "It was a great atmosphere," said Downs-Dudley. "The bands were amazing. It was a good combination of a benefit, student bands and school."

Photo Credit: Rei Wang

Greg Talent of The Situation jams at OXFAM.

Photo Credit: Rei Wang

Devil In The Kitchen relaxes after a performance.

Girls Hockey Proves to Be a High-Scoring Attack

By Simon Lehar

The Lexington Girls Varsity hockey team got off to a tremendous start to the season by winning their first four games and outscoring their opponents 40-3. However, their last three games have resulted in three losses. Leading the team were senior captains Casey McAlduff on defense and forwards Sarah Mazzone and Molly Costello.

Senior Melissa Doo, juniors Allie Robertson and Meagan Phelan, sophomores Kristina Hankins and Jill McNabb, and freshman Tara Healey have put up an amazing scoring attack against their opponents, averaging 6 goals a game. Junior Mandy Magarian, sophomores Haley Busa, Leigh Riley, and Caroline Winn, and freshman Maxine Singleton have defended well along with goalies Libby Jauvtis and Rachel Wolfman to hold opposing teams to an average of less than two goals per game.

Lexington crushed their first four opponents, which included Stoneham, 14-1; Sandwich, 9-0; Belmont, 7-1; and Algonquin, 10-1. The biggest loss of the year was a 5-2 defensive struggle against Winchester. The Lexington forwards peppered Winchester's goalie, but couldn't find the back of the net. Hankins managed to score in the second and third periods.

Coach Jay Pelkey pointed out sophomore defender Busa's progression throughout the season. "Haley Busa has been progressing at the center position for us and has just been playing great hockey, she doesn't back down from anybody."

Even though the team has struggled in their last games, Coach Pelkey said, "We are coming together as a team and I think a lot of the players are getting better."

Wrestlers Grapple with Injuries

By Mike Grossi

The Lexington varsity wrestling team started off their 2005 season with a heated competition at their quad meet, performing very well but only winning one of their three matches. Lexington opened against a physically tough Malden team. Senior captains Alex Dixon and Jason Barth, as well as junior Mike Bittarelli and freshman Cameron Rawnsey all posted pins in the match. Even though the Minutemen fought valiantly, they weren't able to pull away with the victory.

In their second match of the meet, Lexington went up against St. Johns Prep, one of the top wrestling schools in the state. Junior Karthik Sugumaran dominated his match, pulling away with a technical fall, and beat his opponent by 15 points. Even though Lexington lost, they came away with the knowledge that they could compete with the best schools in the state.

The Minutemen posted a second victory on December 15 by easily defeating Malden Catholic. Bittarelli dominated his match, winning by the score of 16-1. Barth, Rawnsey, and junior Alex Goulet also posted pins in the 42-31 drubbing of Malden Catholic. Lexington then placed ninth overall at a tournament in Wakefield. Sugumaran, Barth, and Bittarelli placed within the top five in their respective weight classes. In the next tournament at Pentucket, Bittarelli placed third in the 140 weight class, posting a 5–1 record in his matches.

Since early December, the team has had a rollercoaster ride for the season and their record stands at 4–5. On a high note, the Minutemen steamrolled Bellingham, posting a 52–26 victory. Rawnsey, Sugumaran and Bittarelli all pinned their opponents and Barth, Dixon and Casey Pellegrino wrestled well.

Boys Swimming

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ponents in Xavarian and St. Johns Prep. They outswam the former but lost to the latter.

In their next Middlesex showdown, Lexington defeated a talented Reading Rockets team by 95-70. Lexington placed first in eight of the eleven events. LHS got a first place finish in the 200-yard medley behind the team of O'Brien, Stephen Chang, Matt Carper, and Alex Teng. They also took first in the 200-yard freestyle with Lee Chang posting a time of 1:57.22, and O'Brian sealed up first in the 100-butterfly with a stunning time of 56.00 seconds. The Minutemen also claimed first place in the 200-yard individual medley, 50-yard freestyle and 200-yard freestyle relay.

Boys Basketball Team in the Hunt Again

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Wakefield had no answer for Lexington's big men O'Keefe (22 points) and King (16 points), who undoubtedly had their best game of the year. The Minutemen, however, had trouble defending the perimeter as Wakefield drained a bunch of three's, including a four-point play to send the game into overtime.

In the end though, it was a three-point play by Sullivan that turned the tide of the game. Down the stretch and in the overtime, it was Lexington's clutch free throw shooting that helped them hold on for the win.

Up next for the Minutemen was the team that many consider the favorite in the Middlesex League: Watertown. The Red Raiders started out slow as Lexington ended up with a one point lead at half time, but after a strong second half the Watertown left Lexington with a 65-56 win.

The loss snapped a 33 game winning streak in the Middlesex League for the Minutemen, and dropped them to 5-1 in the Middlesex League for the 2004-2005 season. Cunha had another strong game with 15 points and 15 rebounds, while Curley had 12 points; in the end such effort was simply not enough to overcome the Red Raider's strong guard play.

After such a disappointing loss, the Minutemen bounced back with a solid performance, beating a strong Reading team. Although it did not have the same excitement as the past few games, this game was equally as enjoyable as O'Keefe and Adamian dominated the game with 24 and 13 points respectively. To compliment this, Hanneberry and Friedman hit a number of key free throws to secure the victory for the Minutemen.

Hockey to States

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played admirably for the offense, both netting multiple goals this year.

Coach Mike Keegan's squad has played very well together this season and are looking forward to making a statement in the playoffs.

Ash Selected to Be New Superintendent

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Richard Silverman, former superintendent of Brookline and currently a consultant, and Ashland's Richard Hoffman. The final decision on their candidacy was made the evening of Tuesday, February 8th, after an open session of debate. Besides Tuesday's debate, much of the process of selecting a new town superintendent was also dependent on input from local citizens.

According to Ms. Perry, the Lexington School Committee particularly "wanted to have an open process" in the matter; because of this, there were a number of public interviews of the candidates. The prospective superintendents also made some on-site visits to LHS, during which current students were invited to meet with them, and members of the School Committee in turn visited the candidates' current school systems.

Members of the school community in Lexington--local parents, students, teachers, and administrators--all gave their input on the main needs of the school system as well as which qualities should be present in a superintendent capable of dealing with these needs. As a result, the School Committee received a fair amount of feedback helpful in their selection process.

Ash will be at the forefront of a number of changes in the Lexington school system as soon as he assumes his new position. Most Lexington residents are aware that there have been serious fiscal problems in recent years that resulted in budget shortfalls. In addition to helping straighten out the schools' finances, Ash will also need new staff for a number of positions in the Lexington school system, including principals and a director of student services. Ash's record from the Westwood school system has been admired, and many people involved in the selection process are enthusiastic about his future work in Lexington.

Seasonal Concert

Continued from Page 4

of Eric Schedin. Beginning with "And the Fire Raged", a powerful piece with well-executed crescendos and decrescendos, the Blue Band stole the show. Their final piece was "American Sailing Songs". The familiar phrasing, cheerful rhythms, and overall gusto evoked an extremely positive response from what remained of the crowd.

Recruitment Bill Draws Intense Debate in Senate

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been done over the past few years to protect the rights and physical well being of gay and bisexual students. In fact, Lexington High has one of the most active Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) groups in the region. Some senators, however, feel that the current bill's language should be expanded to cover all groups which might discriminate under the system's larger anti-discrimination language which also covers "race, gender, color, religion... national, origin, age and disability," as well as sexual orientation. Senator Tom Burnett has suggested that a more broadly worded bill to cover all of these areas would bring it more within the stated guidelines of the Lexington Public Schools. At this point it is not clear how such broader a bill would affect the ability of exclusively women's colleges such as Smith and Mt. Holyoke, who wish to come to LHS to recruit applicants.

In response to those who see this bill as means of excluding the U.S. military from our campus, Social Studies teacher and senator Sam Kafrissen pointed out that the bill only covers "recruitment" and does not restrict teachers from inviting members of the armed forces, either active or retired, to come to LHS to speak to classes about their experiences and their positions on the current war in Iraq or previous wars or just on the military as a service. Speaking as a senator representing the GSA, Roberta Beyer said that she found it "hurtful" to see the military recruiters at a table in our main hall, knowing that they openly discriminate against people she knows.

There are a number of important legal issues surrounding this bill that need to be clarified before the Senate can take a final vote and before Principal Michael Jones can either approve it or veto it. Does the No Child Left Behind Act require schools to allow recruiters in under all circumstances? Do similar cases recently decided in favor of laws that prevent the military from recruiting in schools hold sway over similar circumstances in public schools? Finally, does the Senate even have the power to consider such a bill, since they are limited by the LHS Constitution from taking any action which interferes with state or federal law? It appears that the debate will go on until some of these legal issues are sorted out.

Basketball Team Headed to Tournament

By Stuart Easton

Although many thought that this would be somewhat of a rebuilding year, the boys basketball team has come out of the gate showing no drop off from last year's spectacular season. On a team with only two seniors, the underclassmen have been stepping up in Lexington's early season victories.

Facing a Stoneham team with five returning starters, the Minutemen knew they would be in for a tough test; at halftime the score was tied. The Minutemen, however, pulled away in the second half by hitting their free throws and cutting down on their turnovers. Sophomore guard Ross Curley who propelled the team to victory with 5 three-pointers.

Not to be lost in the great guard play are the efforts of the two big guys in the middle, senior Matt King and junior Jimmy O'Keefe, who both posted double-doubles with O'Keefe netting 20 points. Sophomore guard Sean Sullivan, another key contributor, pitched in 9 assists along with 9 points to help the Minutemen come out of Stoneham with a 73-58 win in a back and forth contest.

The second game of the season was the first Friday night home game for many of the underclassmen, and it was to be a true test of how well they could handle the pressure against a competent Melrose team. The first half was dominated by O'Keefe, who scored the majority of Lexington's first twenty points.

Foul trouble, however, limited O'Keefe's playing time for most of the second half. This gave King, sophomore Matt Cunha, and junior Dane DiLiegro a chance to step it up for the Minutemen. Cunha ended up with 18 points, and DiLiegro helped out with outstanding work on the glass and a number of strong defensive plays. Sullivan also played very well, controlling the tempo of the game and setting up fellow guards junior Armen Adamian and senior Zack Friedman for good shots. In the end, Lexington came out with a decisive 69-46 win over a quality Melrose team.

The third game of the season was touted as a showdown between two of the stronger teams in the Middlesex league, as both Lexington and Belmont had two wins entering the contest. After a tough first half, which saw both teams struggling on the offensive end, the Minutemen headed into the locker room with a slim lead.

Belmont, however, could not maintain their defensive pressure in the second half as Curley, Friedman, and junior Tom Henneberry drained a barrage of three's that gave the Minutemen the lead. With this hot shooting, the middle of the floor was wide open for O'Keefe, who took advantage of the situation and had another strong game with 17 points and 9 rebounds. King also posted a solid effort with double-digit rebounds.

Next on the Minutemen schedule was another strong team in Woburn. This was a highly contested game in which regulation, and even later an overtime, were not enough to decide.

The Minutemen had had two previous chances to triumph when an out-of-bounds play was run for Adamian and his jumper rimmed out. Then, Friedman had a three-quarters court heave bounce of the back of the rim. In the second overtime, though, they both stepped it up as Friedman hit a huge three to give the Minutemen the lead for good; Lexington ended up taking the game 70-65. Another key contributor in the victory was Cunha, who had 20 points and 11 rebounds.

After such a close game with incredible edge-of-your-seat excitement, Lexington followed up with yet another thriller. This time the opponent was Wakefield, and this game only took one overtime to decide the outcome.

During both regulation and overtime,

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Photo Credit: Selena Lane

Kevin Lin makes his way around the track.

Boys Hockey Skates into States
First Appearance in 24 Years

By Arjun Gokhale

After a near quarter century of futility, the Lexington boys' hockey team have finally clinched a playoff birth. The Minutement started the season with three victories before suffering tough losses to Reading and Burlington. They currently stand at 10-6-1 overall on the season, with 8 wins in the Middlesex League. Playing with the mantra that 'defense wins championships', the Minutemen have held opposing teams to just two goals all year. The LHS team cracked the Globe's Top 20 ranking for hockey teams in Massachusetts.

The Minutemen's amazing defense is led by senior captain Jesse Spartachino and junior Alex Abramo, who set the tone for games with his physical play. Playing tough opponents all season long, the Minutemen opened against a Stoneham squad with twelve seniors in their opening game. Sophomore goalie John Bienkowski stopped 21 shots to get his first shutout of the year. In the second game against a Melrose team that qualified for the playoffs last year, the Minutemen cruised to an easy 3-1 win.

In the third game against the Everett Crimson Tide, the Minutemen scored early and often. Senior Steve Chiracosta converted on a breakaway opportunity to expand Lexington's lead to two. The game featured many big hits, including Spartachino leveling a Crimson Tide at center ice. Senior co-Captains Mike Bienkowski and Paul Wentzell also contributed several big hits.

Photo Credit: Arjun Gokhale

Steve Chiracosta battles during Lexington's 5-1 victory over the Everett.

The physical play caused a scary moment late in the second period when two Minutemen went after the puck in front of the Everett goal and inadvertently crashed into their goalie. He was down for a minute before getting up and finishing the game. The Tide got off just 10 shots, but each one presented a serious scoring opportunity. They were not able to work the puck past the Minutemen defense, but got their opportunities on breakaways.

Chiracosta and junior Bart Tocci have

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Track Teams Edged out by Reading Rockets

By Kevin Slane

This winter has been a cold one, but the boys and girls indoor track teams have been red hot. However, both teams were recently edged out in dramatic meets against Reading, losing both on the last relay event.

All season long, the boys have been led by senior captains Jon Cunha, Archie Abrams, and Paul Morris who have posted huge wins and have shown no signs of slowing down. Not only have the boys won all their meets, but many have produced state-qualifying times or distances. On the season, seniors Morris, Jon Cunha and Shyam Vimal, juniors Willi Ballenthin, Andrew Bowen and Mark Liu, and sophomores Dave Brown, Brian Longo and Meikle Paschal have all qualified in their respective events.

Lexington matched up against Wakefield on January 15, and both the boys and girls teams were victorious yet again, by scores of 55-31 and 57-29, respectively. Both teams netted their fifth wins of the season.

The girls got exemplary running from their senior captains Julia Bond, Marilyn Heymann, and Olivia Chuang. The girls have also had an amazing season, with qualifying times or distances from senior Janelle Eloi, juniors Libby Mislan, Sharikka Finley-Moise and Katherine Foster, sophomore Jasmine Curry and freshmen Elisabeth Kernan.

Swimmers Capture League

By Stuart Grimes

Led by Matt O'Brien, Steven Cheng, Matt Carper, Dan Sheridan and their outstanding relays, the boys swimming team dominated the recent Middlesex League meet. Coming off a perfect season and a Middlesex League title, expectations were high for the LHS boys swimming team going into the 2005 season. The Minutemen are fortunate to have a nice blend of experience and youth that most of their competition does not possess.

This year's team is guided by co-captains senior Matt Li and juniors Dan Sheridan and Matt O'Brien.

The team opened the season nicely with a win against Melrose that Lexington won handily. The team went on to face two very tough non-league op-

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Photo Credit: Ani Sanyal

Kara Reardon and Allison Needham fight for position against Melrose.